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DANCING STAR MAGAZINE

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James A. Rozanas

THE COVER: Although the new costumes for San Francisco Ballet's exciting new production of "The Nutcracker" were not ready when Dancing Star went to press, leading dancers Nancy Johnson and Gordon Paxman are pictured by Bill Cogan in an interpretation of their roles in the ballet.

"The Nutcracker" of San Francisco

by James Graham - Luján
Artistic Director of the San Francisco Ballet

Part of the importance and excitement of any work of art is the approach of the artists to it; but the determination of this approach is also the first problem creative artists must face.

The San Francisco Ballet has been performing its full-length "Nutcracker" since 1944; its version was the first full-length one in America and this is its tenth anniversary year. Because personnel has changed completely, and because the production shows signs of wear, the San Francisco Ballet Guild, under Mrs. William Bayless, voted funds for a complete new production: four huge sets and 153 costumes. The designers of the original "Nutcracker," Antonio Sotomayor and Russell Hartley were in Europe at the time the production was planned; they were therefore not available for consultation. Willam Christensen, choreographer of the original, was away also — as head of the Dance Department of the University of Utah. So the new production needed new directors also. These had to be, will-nilly, Lew Christensen as Director and choreographer, and I, as Artistic Director, such being our posts in the company. We, as directors, had one immediate and unanimous choice for a designer: Leonard Weisgard. (I had the added privilege of realizing that Lew Christensen was at last to do a ballet worthy of his great talents.)

Mr. Weisgard had designed "Le Gourmand" for us, and had thus given us perhaps the most distinguished ballet in our repertoire. Working on "Le Gourmand," Mr. Weisgard had, in his understanding of Lew Christensen's abilities, become more of a collaborator than a designer.

(Leonard Weisgard is an extraordinary man — if only for his modesty. I had known him as an indefatigable worker, but I knew very little about the scope of his work, until a trip to a library and a scanning of its card catalogue revealed him as either author or illustrator of more than 150 children's books!)

Now the problem of approach to a new "Nutcracker" seemed easier of solution, with Leonard Weisgard as ally. There still remained the fact that the problem had to be solved in two ways: in costumes and decors by the designer, in choreography by Lew Christensen. Fortunately, Tschaikowsky, sometime before 1892, had met his own problem and solved it rather well.

Consultation of the Botcharov and Benois productions indicated a style of baroque elegance. The Cecil Beaton production for Sadler's Wells Theater Ballet was also one of sophistication. Then there was the compellingly attractive production done early this year by George

Balanchine and Horace Armistead for Lincoln Kirstein's New York City Ballet. This last seemed the nearest to perfection from all standards, but imitation of it would indicate an illicit form of flattery. Not only, then ,were we faced with the problem of approach, but with several solutions to the problem — solutions that each became a closed avenue to us.

The clue to our own particular solution came from the best possible source: from the children who for ten years had been our most contsant as well as our best audiences. The children who came to our yearly performances and who during intermission did their own versions of the choreography up and down the aisles were the ones for us to please; they were our ideal audience. This solution was very compatible to the talents of Mr. Christensen and Mr. Weisgard; probably one or the other first arrived at it.

Thereafter, doors seemed to open, and the task of creation was a joyous one. I had carried photographs of our leading dancers to Mr. Weisgard's Connecticut home. Outdoors, in the autumnal woods, we planned costumes anud scenes that would give the best investiture to our beautiful dancers. Nancy Johnson, as the Sugar Plum Fairy, was to be clothed in a costume that was at once elegant, exotic and sweetly unworldly, for these adjectives seemed to apply both to the Fairy and to Nancy. Gordon Paxman was to be a whimsical, pantomimic Drosselmeyer, full of beguiling tricks; later he was to be a proudly-noble Snow Prince. Sally Bailey was to have diamond-flashing tutus to reflect the elegance of her long-legged beauty. Conrad Ludlow was to be a Cavalier of young devotion to the Sugar Plum Fairy, and of flashing prowess in pas seul. And so forth — down the line of soloists: Christine Bering, Bene Arnold, Fiona Fuerstner, Constance Coler, Virginia Johnson and Carlos Carvajal.

That was our solution. There remains only a tiny postscript to be added, and that postscript is better expressed in Bill Cogan's photographs than in words. The postscript consists of the determination to use as many children in the production as possible. Before, older dancers had taken important parts. But children, better than any other artists, perform best as children. Trained by Harold Christensen, they perform well as dancers, too.

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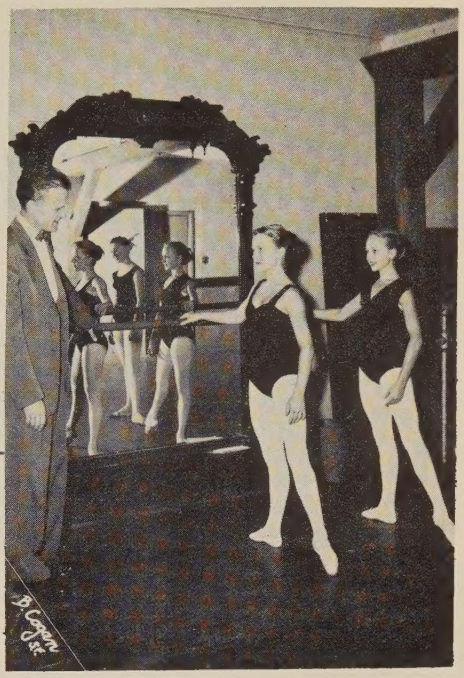
YOUNG DANCERS in "THE NUTCRACKER"

a photographic essay by Dancing Star photographer Bill Cogan.

Tilly Abbe, Pamela Conroy and Suki Saborer are three ballet students of the San Francisco Ballet School cast by Lew Christensen in "The Nutcracker." Being registered in the School, auditioned by Harold Christensen, taught by Nancy Johnson, rehearsed by Gordon Paxman, or lectured to by James Graham-Luján, their exciting entrance into the world of performing ballet makes a capsule version of the happy ending to the stories of all fortunate young dancers. That is the subject of this photographic essay.

1. **ENTRANCE.** Asked by Bill Cogan to pose by the gates to the ballet school, Suki Schorer thinks it necessary to indicate that from the first day she realized the importance of a foot turn-out.

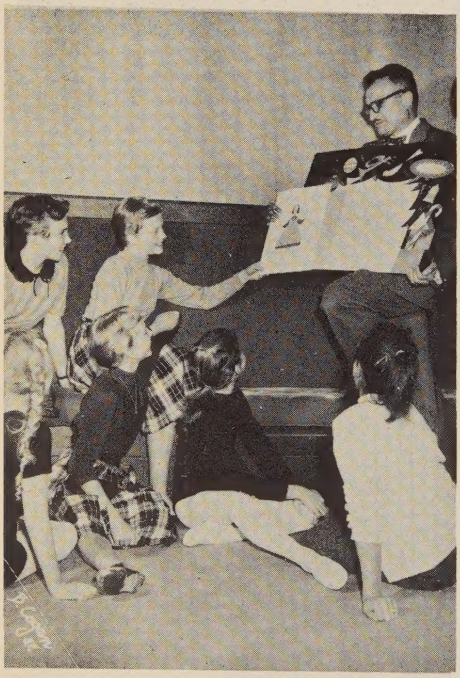
2. **REGISTRATION.** Pretty secretary, Margaret Willard, smiled at them when they asked to enroll in school. They didn't at the time realize that Margaret Willard's unfailing smile was one of the school's assets.



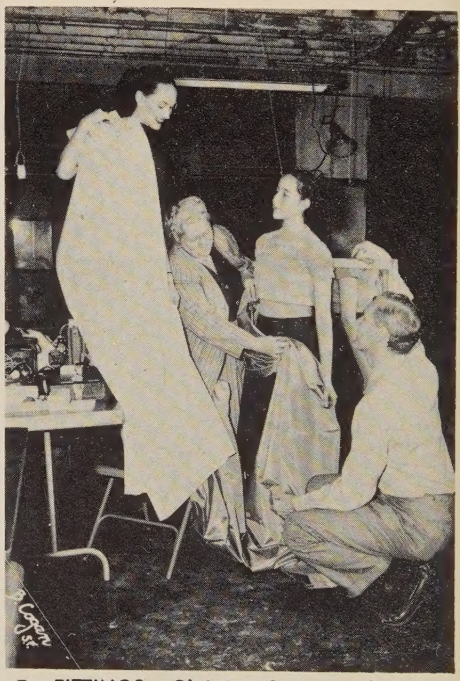
3. AUDITION. They weren't as poised as this the first time they were confronted by Harold Christensen, but they are now proved students. Tilly and Pamela are scholarship winners.

4. TOE CLASS. Nancy Johnson tells them that the hands are as important in a passe as the feet.

5. REHEARSAL. Handsome ballet master, Gordon Paxman, instructs them while younger aspirants look on.



6. LECTURE. James Graham-Lujan, in History of the Theatre Class demonstrates Leonard Weisgard's designs. Tilly helps Mr. Graham-Lujan hold the design for Clara's costume. Graham-Lujan needs a knee to prop up the design for the permanent proscenium.



7. FITTINGS. Christine Bering and Bene Arnold, soloists of the company, smile at the prospect of lovely new costumes. Eloise Arnold does the fitting. Lew Christensen does a deep plie.

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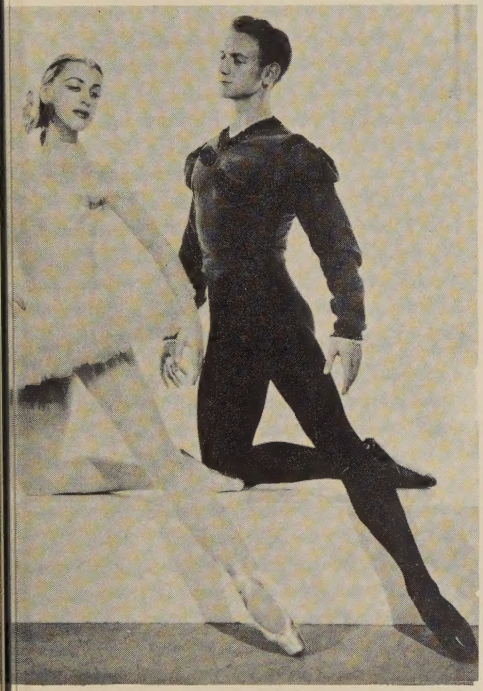

8. FINISHED PRODUCT. Nancy Johnson and Gordon Paxman are in the positions that the three young dancers hope to achieve. Dates for their performances are: December 18 and 19 at San rFancisco's War Memorial Opera House. Tuesday, December 21, at Berkeley's Community Theatre. Wednesday, December 22, at Sacramento's Memorial Auditorium. January 14 and 15 at Stanford University's Memorial Auditorium. Tilly Abbe, Pamela Conroy and Suki Schorer will be seen in dedicated attendance upon Nancy Johnson and Gordon Paxman.

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The DANCING STAR

Broadway Dance Beat

By David Raher

★ ★ ★ The main event of the preceding month was the return to these shores, after a long absence, of Teresa and Luisillo. The young husband-and-wife-team have spent a good deal of time in Europe acquiring a company of Spanish dancers and building a reputation to go with it. Thus, there appearance here at the lush Hellinger Theatre, was a marked improvement over their unfortunate predecessors, the Hurtado de Cordoba troupe, whose season ended abruptly but a few days earlier.

Teresa and Luisillo have surrounded themselves with a company of young people, exceedingly proficient in their metier and with attractive personalities. The numbers and ballets are lavishly dressed and decorated while the production as a whole moves like a well-oiled machine. Luisillo has abandoned some of the spit-fire technique he acquired during his Amaya period, in favor of elegance and restraint. Physically, he bears a striking resemblance to French actor, Jean Louis Barrault. Teresa too, seems considerably calmer.

The ingedient lacking in this company, as with its sister companies—Greco and Hurtado de C—is taste. Argentinita had it and by it set a standard (for me at any rate) for all future companies. It is the remarkable faculty for understanding the proportions of production; the recognition of quality of movement economically used; and the sensitivity to color and design sparingly applied. It is a uniquely rare gift among performers.

Nevertheless, Teresa and Luisillo have been warmly received by critics and public alike, and have embarked upon a tour of America that will take them well into the month of March.

★ ★ ★ Dancer Viola Essen bickering with the Trinity Corporation over a back injury she sustained when the roof of her Greenwich Village home collapsed. Miss Essen claims it prevented her from accepting an engagement with the Ballet Theatre company last spring.

Not fully recovered, the much married ballerina (she was a child star at the age of three), she is dividing her time between running her school—the New York Academy of the Dance, in Carnegie Hall, and performing on TV.

Her latest stint was a filmed commercial in which the lines of the 1955 Lincoln-Mercury are compared to those of the dancer. The commercial is displayed every Sunday on 'Toast of the Town'.

★ ★ ★ Mark and Emily Ryder who have successfully barnstormed the country as a dance team for the past few years have decided to expand.

They are forming a larger company that will consist of six dancers, themselves included, to be called The Dance-Drama Company. Gypsy Brenner, Marilyn Poudier and David Gold are three of the dancers signed so far; a fourth male dancer is being sought.

Mr. Ryder has great plans for his miniature troupe. The new repertoire is to include works by choreographer Maslow, Weidman, Sokolov, Robbins and possibly Bettis and Holm. He is even considering a transformation of the Leonard Bernstein opera 'Trouble in Tahiti', into a ballet. The composer has already assented to the idea.

At this writing the Dance-Drama Company has a five to seven weeks tour planned which will begin in February. Their local appearance will take place at the YMHA on April 10th and 16th.

★ ★ ★ Jerome Robbins hospitalized with with a mysterious ailment. ★ ★ ★ Bethsabee Rothschild planning another season of Martha Graham for spring of '55, it is whispered. ★ ★ ★ Two local dance record companies have brought out some interesting and remarkable disc sets. For collectors, Rainbow Records presents Alexandra Danilova (Russian accent and all) conducting barre exercises for an intermediate class. ★ ★ ★ The Selva-Ringle Company of N.Y. has pressed a set of eight records that should prove invaluable to teachers whose pianists fail them. Complete barre exercises and center practice accompaniment is provided; directed by Thalia Mara and played by Vladimir Djury. The selections are tastefully chosen and in most cases of sizeable length. Notes are also provided, on enchainements, for those instructors whose ingenuity fails. Records are $1.69 and notes $1. each. ★ ★ ★ Anna Sokolow is listed as choreographer for the performance of Stravinsky's 'L'Histoire du Soldat' and Alban Berg's 'Lyric Suite' to be given December 18th and 19th as part of The Evening of Modern Music, Theatre and Dance, at the Lex-YMHA.

★ ★ ★ 'The World Dances', an international folk dance festival on film is a must for dance lovers. ★ ★ ★ Jose Limon & Company in South America, curtesy of the International Exchange Program. The tour, consisting of one month, will be equally distributed among the citizens of Rio, Sao Paulo, Montevideo and Buenos Aires, in that order. ★ ★ ★ Proof that true love will not for long be parted: Sol Hurok and Ballet Theatre have been reunited by the signing of a three-year bond. The lovers parted company way back in 1946.

Jose Limon, Lucas Hoving, Pauline Koner and Letitia Ide in Limon's 'Otello'.

★ ★ ★ Sophie Maslow, New Dance Group director, drew warm praise for her choreographic contributions to 'Sandhog', the new musical about immigrants building tunnels. ★ ★ ★ Mavis Walters, whose impersonation of a blind beggar woman in the current production of 'The Dybbuk' at the 4th St. Theatre, drew much critical approval, was invited to chat with a Mr. Kaplan, talent scout for Paramount Pictures. The incredulous dancer was told that she has an interesting face, and will be kept in mind for future movie assignments. (Ed Note: David Raher, author of this column, is also in

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'The Dybbuk'). ★ ★ ★ Sono Osato tells me there is a possibility that Ballet Ballads will be revived. The original company in which Miss Osato was featured in 1948, clicked in an off Broadway Theatre and before long was shifted to the main stem. It did not, however, continue to thrive in its new atmosphere, and folded after a three-month struggle. Now its producer, a certain Mr. Fanning, is planning its revival. Lyricist, John Latouche has indicated that he would like to do his ballad 'Red Riding Hood Revisited' for the new production.

★ ★ ★ Publishers G.P. Putnam's Sons of N.Y. have given a handsome production to the new book by photographer Paul Himmel and dance critic Walter Terry, called Ballet in Action ($10.).

Photographer Himmel, a leading fashion photographer, crusades against the conventional type of dance photograph, which he finds static, by introducing a new type whose outlines are considerably blurred, intending thereby to give an impression of continued action.

The book contains dozens of these in addition to a smaller number of the usual, clearly delineated type photo-

Viola Essen in 'The Nutcracker'.
—Walter E. Owen—

The German-Bavarian Mountain Dance Group perform the authentic 'Schuhplattler' Dance in the film, 'The World Dances'.

graph. The latter, incidentally, are excellently done and in the estimation of this reviewer convey more acurately the quality of design, sentiment and idea of the choreography than do the revolutionary ones introduced in this volume.

Ballets from the repertoire of the N.Y.C.Ballet are used as subject matter. They include Orpheus, Swan Lake, Lilac Garden, Serenade, Picnic at Tintagel, Interplay, Sylvia: Pas de Deux and Illuminations. Walter Terry accompanies each work with an analytical and narrative essay.

★ ★ ★ Evidence of the fact that ballet dancing and ballet dancers have achieved stature both inside and outside of the theatre is noticeable by the regularity with which the latter are being used as entertainment at high ranking social affairs.

Two such recent functions boasted the distinguished talents of Alicia Markova, Katie Geleznova, Lynn Marcus Dean Crane, Jerry Leavitt and Vladimir Doukodovsky.

Markova contributed her services in the form of a bit of 'Chopiniana' to the Seven Crown Ball, held to raise funds

for the Hospitalized Veteran's Service. The elegant ball took place in the grand ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria, Nov. 2nd and numbered among its guests leaders of society, royalty and celebrities from all walks of life.

The English ballerina, whose number followed the presentation of seven duchesses (flown in from odd corners of the earth, we were informed) in a kind of diamond studded fashion parade, was in good company. We were especially

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A Xmas Dancing Story

Good Christian Men-Rejoice

PETER JEFFERYS mounted the steep stairs to his attic room, his eyes automatically following the pattern on the worn lino dimly illuminated by a low wattage bulb hanging well beyond the reach of any would-be bulb stealer.

The faint echo of "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" that came to him failed to evoke anything more than a cynical smile. There was no such thing as "Christmas spirit" for him—and hadn't been for years past, for he was one of those rare beings who are completely alone in the world. His father and mother had died when he was quite young, and there were no aunts, uncles or cousins as far as he knew. Certainly none had visited the orphanage. "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen!" His cynical grin gave way to a puckered expression of self-pity as he remembered that even his landlady was going away this Christmas.

By

BILL SIMMONS

Friends? He had none. His meagre wages would allow few indulgences in social interplay even if he could spare the time for such from a self-imposed regime of study and correspondence courses.

"Oh tidings of comfort and joy. . . ." The sweet voices of young choirboys singing in the next street were carried to him clearly on the wind which was audibly attacking the gutter and a loose slate or two on the sloping roof immediately above his head. "No comfort and joy here," he muttered, then: "Get on with your work, you fool" and obeying it, he put a match to the oil stove in the corner, reached for some text books on a shelf, placed them on the rickety table, drew up a chair and prepared to improve a brain which he knew was sadly deficient even for the modest career he hoped to carve for himself.

He tried hard to concentrate but the many noises from the streets below, indicative of seasonal goodwill, came up to mock him.

Good Chrisian Men rejoice. . . ." The carol singers were nearer now.

"Rejoice about what," he muttered, "why can't they stop their fool noises!" He suddenly stood up. "It's no use," he told himself. "I've got to get out of

here."

Automatically straightening his tie and running his fingers through his hair, he put on his overcoat and cluttered down the stairs.

★ ★ ★

He had been walking for some time, instinctively making his way towards the lights and the crowds.

Dance halls had never attracted him, yet the warmly lit entrance, the faint sounds of music, the happy murmur of the crowds within seemed to hold irresistible appeal for him tonight.

He paused, hesitating, allowing, despite himself, the enticement to gain a firmer hold.

In a very short space of time he was standing at the edge of the dance floor, and shortly after that had been been caught up in the whirl of a Paul Jones.

He hesitated before the girl who had stopped opposite to him.

"Well," she said, "You're not going to leave me high and dry are you?"

"I—I'm not much of a dancer," he stammered.

"Neither am I," she replied, "and what does that matter in this crowd and only three days to Christmas and all."

He smiled then. "O.K.," he said. "It's on your own head."

There was a hint of motherliness in the eyes that peered just above his right shoulder, as he clasped her in his gauche embrace and partnered her into the maelstrom of happy humans.

It was an hour or so later. He, having ascertained that her name was Jennifer, and that though she had come to the dance with a party she had no especial boy friend amongst them, had diffidently asked her to have a cup of coffee, and was now sharing a table with her, his face still showing the gratification her smiling acceptance of his offer had induced.

"I suppose you're all set for a lovely Christmas aren't you, Peter? With masses of friends and relations and everything?"

"I—I—well yes, of course."

Her level grey eyes, smiling, yet somewhat shrewd for one barely out of her teens, gazed into his for a moment.

"And you?" he questioned.

"There are always masses of people around me at Christmas, and I love every moment of it."

"Of course—everyone does." His pride now took a hand. "We, that is my family, are all going to my auntie's. She—she lives at Richmond. Er—what about you, are you going away?"

"No, I'm staying in London. But you needn't pity me."

Pity her!

Afraid of being hurt by what she might relate about her forthcoming happinesses, and spurred on by wishful thinking he monopolised the rest of the conversation by wild inventions as to his and his family's plans for the holiday, not noticing that her glances became shrewder if, at the same time, more soft.

"Well, Peter," she said, as he stood hesitating before her on the pavement, loth to wish her goodbye, yet too shy to ask her if he might take her home, "Some of my girl friends are waiting for me. It's only a step to where I'm staying so there's no need to offer to take me home."

"Oh—er well, goodnight."

"I very much enjoyed talking to you and," she paused, "a happy, happy Christmas."

"Thank you. The same to you."

"Thanks." She paused again but he, prompted by shyness and something else, was already moving away.

★ ★ ★

The doctor was talking to the sister outside the operating theatre at Charing Cross hospital.

"Bad luck him getting a nasty fracture like that on Christmas Eve. It wasn't as though he'd got it through over-celebrating. Caught his foot in some worn lino

Modern dancer, Merce Cunningham, winner of a Guggenheim Fellowship, will appear in his own works at The Academy of Music in Brooklyn, this fall under the auspices of Theatre for Dance series.

(from page 357)

proud when Mrs. Lytle Hull, mistress of ceremonies for the occasion, introduced Markova as the 'Queen of Ballerinas', for it was a true and fitting tribute.

Later, when we commented on this to the tiny ballerina she remarked modestly that, Queen or no Queen, she still had to rub elbows with pots and pans and other assorted kitchen ware in order to reach the stage of the grand ballroom; no other passage being available. ★ ★ ★ At another swank shin-dig on November 23rd the entrance made by dancers Katia Geleznova ('On Your Toes'), Lynn Marcus (Metropolitan Opera Ballet) Dean Crane ('Fanny') and Jerry Leav-

(page 369)

or something didn't he ? "

" That's right doctor."

" Well, we've set it all right. You can tell his people he'll be O.K. though he'll have to spend a couple of days here."

" He hasn't any relations that we can trace, doctor, and his landlady said she didn't know of any."

" Hmm. Really ! What about her, is she coming to see him ? "

" No. She's spending Christmas out of town—she was in a mighty hurry to go too."

A spark of anger showed in the doctor's eyes. " I hope he sues her for that worn lino. Well, he'll be out of the anaesthetic in an hour or so. He can go in a ward." He hesitated. " See that he's looked after—er—you know."

" Of course, doctor."

" Goodnight then, sister—or rather good morning, and a happy Christmas."

" Thank you. doctor, the same to you."

★ ★ ★

". . . Oh, and nurse Howells ! "

" Yes, sister ? "

" The new patient in bed number seven—the arm fracture, hasn't a relative or friend in the world so far as we can discover. Please bear that in mind will you ? "

" Yes, indeed, sister."

" Good. Carry on."

Nurse Howells started her day duty by visiting the bed of the new patient who stirred as she approached.

" Why, Peter," she breathed. " It's you."

His clouded eyes lit up. " Jennifer ! "

" But—but." She turned away suddenly, busying herself with the coverings at the foot of the bed.

" You—you know now that—that it was all lies about—well about my auntie at Richmond and the rest."

Her eyes were very bright. She nodded slowly. " You're spending Christmas with us—with me."

" Yes."

" It'll be very happy."

" Yes. I know."

Somewhere a wireless had been turned on and faintly over the cold morning air came boys' voices singing " Good Christian Men Rejoice."

Peter listened for a moment then smiled at Jennifer. " Yes," he said. " Yes."

●

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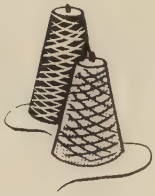

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LONDON FOOTNOTES

by

PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND

THE TEACHERS AND THEIR CHARGE

1954 has not been a very happy year for British ballet. One evidence of this is that the event which has been given most prominence is the exhibition commemorating the era of Serge Diaghilev.

Many factors, many people are responsible for the gradual elimination of fire from English ballet. That the adequate, the competent, the 'all right' has become sufficient is the responsibility of quite a few. Dancers, choreographers, directors—and teachers.

In Britain—and I write of this here because it applies also in the United States—the teaching of dancing is at a low ebb. The teachers are without personal theatrical experience too often. Those few with practical experience live in some misty past. What we lack are dancers of high quality who have turned, through natural aptitude, to teaching when they have past their prime.

The charlatans and money-makers are doing well. The dear old ladies who spend half of each class reminiscing over the 'lost' great days are doing well. The dancers, given adequacy as goal and laziness as routine, are doing well. Or so they think.

Only the art, the entertainment of ballet is not doing well. Most children come into ballet driven by a desire to achieve. One does not 'take up' ballet as an alternative to becoming a stenographer.

What then, happens to the desire? What happens to the ambition, the ideals the zest?

Are they torn to shreds by the dank inefficiency of the teachers, laughed asside by directors who know ballet as an administration rather than as an art? Or just tossed out like a worn shoe by choreographers with as much enthusiasm as a trade union stage carpenter?

Certain it is that, somewhere along the way, the young minds and bodies who are today's and tomorrow's ballet are being snubbed into precocious aquiesence. It is not natural for the young to be subservient, to say,'yes, sir' and swallow pride and idealism.

The young come into ballet—what are the teachers doing with their charge?

□ □ The European tour of Sadler's Wells has been one of few surprises. Violetta Elvin and Svetlana Beriosova received most of the praise, Margot Fonteyn received less than might have been expected, and English ballet as a whole took a few well-earned slaps. The long ballets and the pretentious ones were condemned, the English-trained dancers were found cold, dull, and rather anaemic.

None of this was news. But if it penetrated the heirachy of English ballet, they gave little sign.

Meanwhile, in London, the Japanese dance company of Miho Hanayagui arrived to show us the patient, slow, traditional posturing of these Isadora Duncans. The City Ballet, a new try at sell-

ing ballet as a 50 cent lunchtime repast moved into London's centre to no more response than it had gained in the financial district of London. Apart from this: no ballet!

□ □ From Russia two highly accomplished dancers came to crack the bleakness but to see seven minutes of them I had to sit through two hours of a celebration for 'British Soviet Friendship'!

Hardly ideal circumstances, but Raissa Struchkova and Alexander Lapauri, her husband, used their few minutes to show us that even thirty-seven years of Sovietizing cannot rid Russia of its supremecy in the ballet.

□ □ Anna Ivanova returned from Cuba where she has been working on the planned Cuban Ballet of Alicia Alonso. Whether South America, already visited by de Cuevas and Petit this year, and no doubt soon to see Serge Denham's Ballet Russe and Lucia Chas'es Ballet Theatre, can stand a permanent national company I do not know. I doubt it.

But Alonso should be working in New York, not planning a tiny movement in Cuba.

□ □ Svetlana Beriosova, having completed the continental Sadler's Wells tour, is dancing in Belgrade, where Margot Fonteyn appeared previously as guest ballerina.

—Drawing by Ryan

Violetta Elvin

□ □ Violetta Elvin was offered a spot on the General Motors video show, and a six-week nitery contract, but had to refuse the contracts. A pity. Elvin is the type of dancer who would win very high popularity in the United States.

B-R-I-E-F-L-Y

Beryl Grey, prior to returning with the Wells, has been dancing with the Helsinki Ballet. . . .Anton Dolin flies back from the U.S. to star with Alicia Markova in a Christmas show here. . . .Sonia Arova has joined the de Cuevas Ballet. . . .

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The Girl Who Likes to Try Everything

AFTER the New Haven opening of "The Girl in Pink Tights" there were the usual conflicting opinions about the potentialities of this musical comedy and what ought to be changed and polished in the five weeks before the New York premiere. However, the large group of New Yorkers present appeared to agree on one thing. Renée Jeanmaire is the most exciting musical-comedy personality to come along in the postwar period.

Mlle. Jeanmaire's success will surprise no one who has followed her ballet career. From the beginning it has been clear that here was a girl with a passion for work, a superb theatrical instinct, a highly intelligent sense of humor, and above all an unquenchable desire to try everything.

Like most ballet dancers, Zizi (a nickname acquired when as an infant she tried to pronounce "Jésus" and wound up with "Zeezee") began young. At ten she was a member of the apprentices at the Paris Opéra. By eighteen she had developed to the point where she was giving occasional gala performances with a partner. But already she was getting restless with a constant diet of classical ballets. "L'Opéra is nice for a couple of months a year," she says, "but I did not care for it as a steady job."

She left to join the Monte Carlo Ballet, in which she starred for two years. Then came a switch to the Ballet Russe for a brief period, after which she met a young choreographer named Roland Petit and cast her fortunes with his new little troupe. While the Petit company was both progressive and good (the first year Zizi was there Margot Fonteyn danced with them), Zizi kept after M. Petit to produce a big ballet for her. Finally he thought up the idea of doing a dance version of "Carmen." "When he said it I was frightened," recalls Zizi, "'Carmen' is so dramatic; I didn't think I could do it, but I wanted to try."

Try she did, and when "Carmen" opened at the Princess Theatre in London it received thirty-two curtain calls and Zizi had enlarged her career beyond the ballet. It was in "Carmen," too, that she first came to Broadway in the spring of 1949. She was a sensation and the late Lee Shubert wanted to star her in a new edition of "Streets of Paris." But Zizi felt honor-bound to stay with Petit even though she had no contract with him.

The following season the dramatic dancer went a step further. She appeared in a new ballet, "La Croqueuse de Diamants," in which she not only capitalized on her dramatic ability, but also sang a song. After performing this half-ballet, half-musical-comedy in Paris and New York the troupe went to the West Coast, where M. Petit was engaged by Samuel Goldwyn to do the choreography and to dance himself in "Hans Christian Andersen." He had already signed Moira Shearer for the featured dancing role, but before it came time to shoot the film Miss Shearer became pregnant and was forced to withdraw. Zizi was hired to replace her. She immediately rented a house with a swimming pool. "I wanted to try everything," she explains.

Zizi had little time for swimming, however. For three months she stud-

—Valente.

Jeanmaire—"real democracy."

ed English with a lady named Robrts and a recording machine. Since he had to speak lines as well as sing nd dance, she was very worried bout the film. "In the first scenes, ecause I am afraid, I laugh too much. am better later on in the picture fter I have seen the rushes."

After the film the dancer returned o Paris with the troupe, despite Mr. oldwyn's attempts to sign her to a onger contract. After rehearsing a hile Zizi and M. Petit decided—as rtistic collaborators so often do—hat the time had come in their careers or each to go their separate ways.

For Zizi, who had been concentrating on modern theatrical ballets, this heant going back and relearning a lassical repertoire. It meant arranging her life around the all-important wice-daily trips between her small npretentious apartment off the Rue igalle and a shabby dance studio on he Boulevard de Clichy two blocks way. And as the song in "La Croueuse de Diamants" put it, "There's othing chi-chi about the Boulevard e Clichy."

Fortunately, Joseph Fields, whom she had met in Hollywood, heard that Zizi was free and cabled her to come to New York and discuss appearing in "The Girl in Pink Tights," for which he was writing the book. She agreed, and last July Shepard Traube, the musical comedy's producer and director, went to Paris with the script—which has to do with how American melodrama and French ballet might have gotten together to produce American musical comedy. Mr. Traube became enchanted with the

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unpretentious way that this celebrated ballerina went about her work. "This is real democracy," he said as he watched her taking her turn in a room with a dozen or so others, most of whom were greatly inferior to her. Being an astute showman, Mr. Traube has brought in a great deal of this inside atmosphere of ballet, so that by the present time the show is one part Kentucky Bourbon and three parts French Vermouth.

Watching the gamine-like Jeanmaire practise is indeed an enlightening experience. The long-thighed dancer goes directly into action with complete economy. Her concentration is so great that she can flick a drop of perspiration off the side of her nose without disturbing the maneuver she is executing. When she is doing a difficult stretch she will bite her tongue, and when she is making quick turns on one foot (fouettés) she grits her teeth in determination to make the turns both rapid and precise. When it comes to performing in front of a mirror, many dancers smile in admiration of their own loveliness and grace. But Zizi, who is lovelier and more graceful than almost any ballerina in the world, wears an expression of deep concern as she analyzes and criticizes some minor inability of a muscle to perform exactly as she wants it. She will suffer agonies during the lesson, and then afterwards comment about the instructor, "He didn't stretch me enough today." Her instructor, when asked her weakness, thinks a moment, "Well, she cannot dance on her hands."

Zizi, who is more critical of herself than anybody else is of her, has a different answer. "Technically perhaps I can do classical ballet, but I don't respect it enough. When I dance I'm not quiet. I can't control my excitement and I jump too much. I could do the first act of Giselle all right, but I would be terrible in the second part, because it becomes something not my character."

The dancer is having no trouble with "The Girl in Pink Tights." In fact, the producers have gone too far in the other direction and in the New Haven version have even called the stage character "Zizi." While this is one of the things Mlle. Jeanmaire hopes to have changed before New York, as she feels that it is too personal and a little pretentious, she is less concerned over what people think or say about her than she is in her

(page 370)

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MISCELLANEOUS DISA & DATA

This is the month when DANCING TAR magazine becomes another year lder. Four years old, to be exact. . . . ope you enjoy the article and photo- raphs on the San Francisco Ballet's Nutcracker' which appears in this is- ue—and which was so ably covered by ames Graham-Lujan (text) and Bill Co- an (photography). . . Beginning next onth you'll be reading more about the City by the Golden Gate', San Fran- isco—and its environs, for we have re- ently added to our staff a refreshingly ew writer, who, by the way, wields a acile pen in the realm of dance. But ore about J. Marks in the January is- ue. . . We feel you'll be interested to arn that Bob Foster who drew the strik- ng July and October 1953 covers for ANCING STAR has another one ready or this magazine. Watch for it on an arly issue. . . Someone asked if we had ut the number of pages in DS...'It seems thinner', they said. The answer is a definite NO! DANCING STAR has 40 pages this December—it had 28 last December. Frankly, we've been using thinner paper for the simple reason that it aids materially in cutting our publishing costs, as well as saves a great deal in postage. . . Last but not least—we want to say again that we honsetly mean it when we say:

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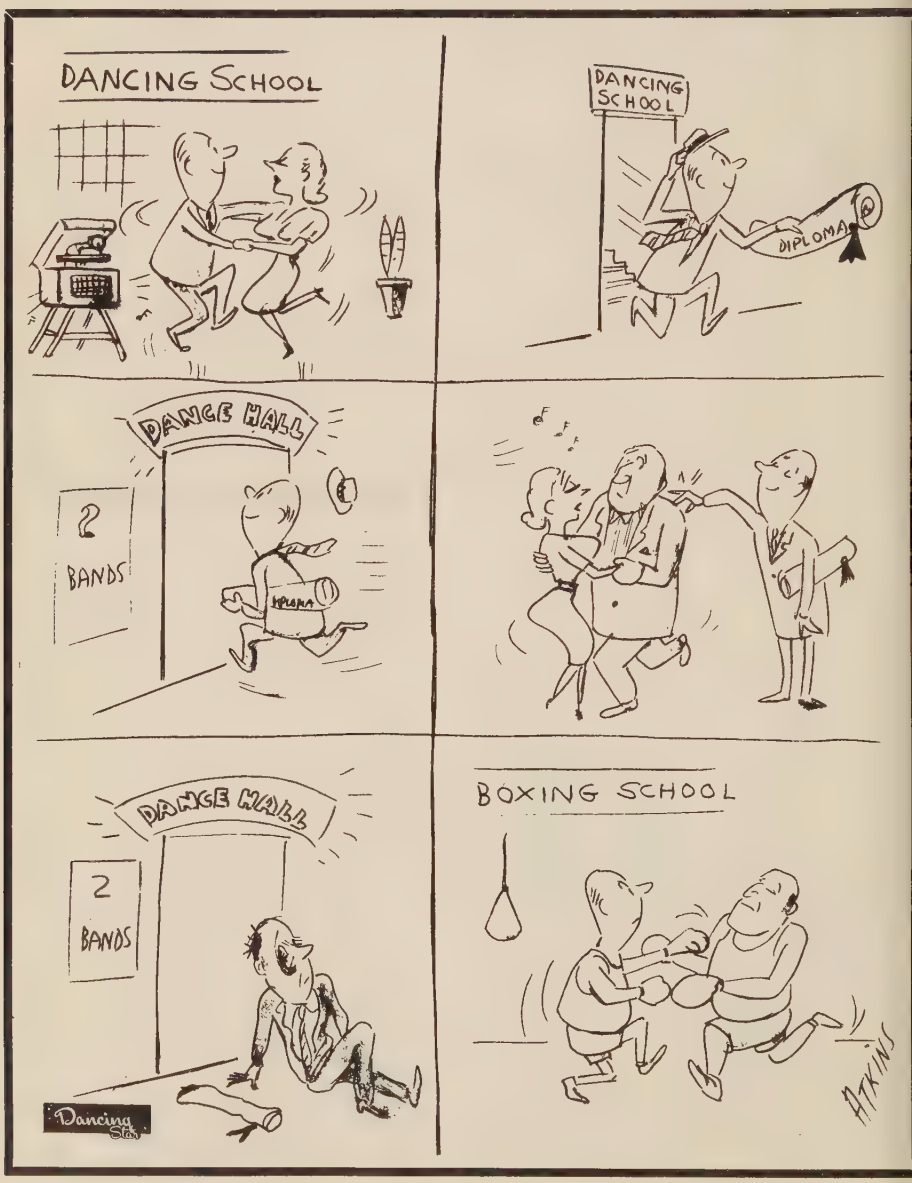

(From page 360)

t (New York City Ballet) was of a less egrading, but more taxing nature.

On the occasion of the International Debutante's Ball, held in the grand allroom of the Hotel Plaza—for the benfit of The Wooden Church Crusade—ladimir Doukodovsky, former leading ancer of the Original Ballets Russes as asked to contribute the choreogra-hy and help with the staging of an elab-rate tableau in which several hundred eople participated. Debutantes, actors, rrestlers, escorts and dancers were lended into a pageant, intended to de-ict the victory of light over darkness.

The idea was conceived and dram-tized by John Harkrider who is cred-ed with the direction and staging as ell. It dealt, as far as I could make ut, with a young couple's escape to eedom, from behind the Iron Curtain. heir heroism is ultimately rewarded r their being presented to Alexandra, rchduchess of Austria, Baroness Eliz-beth von Buchwaldt of Germany, frau-in Gabriella Adenauer, Miss Penelope ankerville Chamberlyne of England and on—all debutantes. It was quite a to-. And around about here, I felt that e author got a bit confused. What has eedom got to do with debutantes and ttle wooden churches, I wondered?

Nevertheless, the four dancers sguised as either darkness (in black otards and tights) or light (in white) d batting gigantic fifteen-foot wings, ere made to weave symbolically in and t of the proceedings.

Tchaikowsky's lovely and mourn-Pathetique was used as musical back-ground and to it Doukodovsky contrived some interesting and heroic movements. They were admirably executed by the four dancers who were continually dogged by a slippery floor, trailing microphone wires, intractable wings and failing light cues. It all ended in a blaze of light (instead of the blackout intended) around 2:30 a.m. The dancers were then able to go home feeling, I am sure, degredation, relief and dog tired.

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THE GIRL WHO LIKES TO TRY EVERYTHING
(from page 366)

evaluation of her own work. As she said when asked if she was disturbed about columnists linking her romantically with Howard Hughes, "As long as my thinking is all right, my behaving is all right."

Since arriving in New York last November Zizi has been kept in a state of happy exhaustion working with Frank Tauritz on her English, with Sylvan Levin on her singing, and with Agnes de Mille on the dances. These collaborations appear to have been fruitful, particularly the latter. Miss de Mille has the reputation of working her dancers till they drop, and Zizi is never satisfied that she has been drilled hard enough, so it must have been an exciting contest. Who won? Perhaps the tip-off can be found in a remark overheard on the way out of the theatre in New Haven. Said one astonished show-business veteran, "It's the first time I've ever seen Agnes do anything with so much sense of humor to it."

—Henry Hewes.

—Reprinted from the SATURDAY REVIEW

The Dance In Chicago

ROD QUIROS

FESTIVAL BALLET

London's Festival Ballet was the first major company to appear in Chicago, this season. This company is now making its first U.S. tour, although it had been formed by Markova and Dolin in 1950.

Much had been heard about Festival Ballet as its Artistic Director, Anton Dolin, has been an international figure in the dance world for many years. In this company Mr. Dolin seems to have concentrated more on dancers than on ballets.

The new ballets, which include 'Vision of Margurite' (Ashton-Liszt), 'Symphony For Fun' (Charnley-Gillis), 'Alice in Wonderland' (Charnely-Horovitz), and the three-act 'La Esmeralda' (Berisoff-Pugni), have in general, good productions. The older ballets, however, appear to be taken for granted and receive ragged productions. 'Les Sylphides' and 'Swan Lake' received the worst treatment, with 'Scheherazade' and Prince Igor right behind them.

Of the new ballets, 'Vision of Marurite' is by far the most satisfying. Using only three dancers, Ashton has told the Faust legend in 15 minutes. The much heralded 'La Esmeralda' proved a monumental flop. This is not to say, however, that it has nothing in its favor, for some parts are most interesting, but on the whole, this ballet is quite boring. The story is too complicated, the choreography uninteresting, and at times out of keeping with the period. The music has been subjected to a brassy, crude, re-orchestration that overweighs the attractive melodies so characteristic of the Romantic Ballet.

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Guest artists included: Tamara Toumanova, who has adopted so many mannerisms that she no longer has any style; Nora Kovach and Istvan Rabovsky, who are at their best in Character parts.

Other soloists were: Violette Verdy, a lovely dancer who has yet to mature; John Gilpin, possessor of a marvelous technique, but devoid of personality; Oleg Briansky, too much personality, but little discipline; Keith Beckett, who is at his best in dramatic roles—and Anton Dolin, himself, who still gives a moving performance of Petrouchka.

⊕ ⊕ ⊕

DANCING:
The Part It Plays In Our Daily Lives

NOTE: ***Beginning this month,* DANCING STAR MAGAZINE *will run the first of a series of articles, items and suggestions designed to help you, as a dance teacher or ballroom operator, to promote greater interest in ballroom dancing.***
— The Editors

(Part One of a Series)

Leading psychologists and sociologists have agreed that dancing is the greatest combatant against social problems, particularly as applied to youth. At a recent convention of civic leaders, university facutly heads and clergy in New York, dancing was one of the main topics of discussion as a fight against juvenile delinquency.

Dancing, unlike most social media, is not bounded by class distinctions or income-group classifications. It is enjoyed by Americans with equal enthusiasm whether they hail from Park Avenue or Railroad Street. The importance of this pastime being recognized more each day.

It has been pointed out that more people enjoy dancing than any other form of recreation. It can not be compared with bowling or other present day popular sports since they require equipment and specialized training. Even swimming, with its many advantages and almost unlimited facilities cannot cope with the musical habit in national appeal and acceptance.

In these days of increased living pace and added mental burdens, dancing is credited with a large contribution toward the morale and relaxation of a hard-working people. It has been estimated that some thirty million people dance each week in their homes or at the thousands of night clubs, ballrooms and private clubs that provide musical accompaniment ranging from the perennial juke box or record player to the big name orchestras.

Dancing also plays an important role in our schools and colleges today. The biggest event of any high school or college semester is still the annual prom. And this is the one event of school life, probably more than any other, that is remembered and talked about in later years.

The wide appeal of dancing can further be illustrated by the many organizations that make it a regular weekly or monthly feature. These include the YMCA and YWCA, Police Athletic League, welfare groups, Girl and Boy Scouts, industrial organization, schools, unions, neighborhood clubs, churches, lodges and other civic groups. Many orphanages, children's institutions and child welfare groups include dancing in the normal schedule of events.

And so from East to West, along the sidewalks of New York and Main Street in Everytown, U.S.A., on both sides of the tracks, "Casey'll Waltz With The Strawberry Blonde, And The Band Plays On."

— Courtesy of General Artists Corporation

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STUDIO NOTES

The Academy of Ballet in San Francisco, held special classes during November which were conducted by Mr. Harijs Plucis, renowned balletmaster of Sadler's Wells.

Mme. Elisa Cansino will present two performances of her Spanish ensemble in a revue titled: 'Spanish Colmado' at the Marine's Memorial Theatre in San Francisco on Dec. 12th.

Jack Stanly of N.Y.City recently completed a series of seven one-day Sunday teachers' sessions at the Helen Nickolson School in Washington, D.C.

Gertrude Edwards Jory, Past President of the Cecchetti Council of America, conducted classes for second and third grade students on November 6th at the Arita Lee Dance Studio in Meadville, Pa. Above some of the students are pictured with Gertrude Edwards Jory.
—Reed McCaskey

ANCE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS

OU ARE WELCOME TO SEND NEWS OF YOUR ASSOCIATION TO THIS COLUMN

TIONAL SMOOTH DANCERS (Gold-Gate Chapter) held a Halloween Cos-ie Ball at Genova Hall in San Fran-co. A Thanksgiving dinner-dance was d at the Marvel-Mar in Marin County Nov. 21st. Door prizes and entertain-nt were contributed by the Golden e Chapter.

ICAGO NATIONAL ASSOCIATION DANCE MASTERS held its Nov. 22nd eting in Des Moines, Iowa at the Sav- Hotel. The faculty included: Mild- Harrabin, Acrobatic Technique and nces; Marie Buczkowski, Character; b Vorreyer, Children's Productions; hard Ellis and Christine DuBoulay, llet Technique, Variations and Char-er Variations from 'Sleeping Beauty'; nny Davis, Modern Jazz; Adele Ar-ian, Intermediate Tap; and Louise , Ballroom. A banquet was held in evening in the Terrace Room.

W YORK SOCIETY of TEACHERS DANCING held its November meet- at the Hotel Astor in New York City. the program arranged by Mrs. Ohl e: Bill Quinn, advanced Tap; Kath-ne Dickson, Ballroom and Catherine Weigh, Spanish Waltz with Castanets.

N FRANCISCO DANCE LEAGUE held usiness meeting to consider propos- events for each of the six ensuing nths: Master Plan for Dance Devel-nent in the Bay Area; Dance Sympos-n for Teen-Age Dancers; Master Les-n by Jean Leon Destine, April 1955 l Art Festival dance program for Sep-ber 1955. Guest speaker for the day s Mrs. Florence Freehof, lecturer and hor of a book on Jewish Dance. The cers-Wright School announced a ser- of lecture-discussions on 'The Back-ground of Dance' to be held at 2695 Sacramento St. Oct. 18, Nov. 15, and Dec. 13th. Lecturers will be Lenore Peters Job, Carol Beals and Judy Job. The YMCA Opera Guild will again present, 'Amahl and the Night Visitor' on Dec. 10-11 at 220 Golden Gate Ave., in San Francisco. Dances for the Production were choreographed and directed by Carol Beals.

NOTE: Most of the DANCE MASTERS of AMERICA affiliate Club notices appear directly in the DMA, Inc. Bulletin which all members receive each month along with DANCING STAR magazine.

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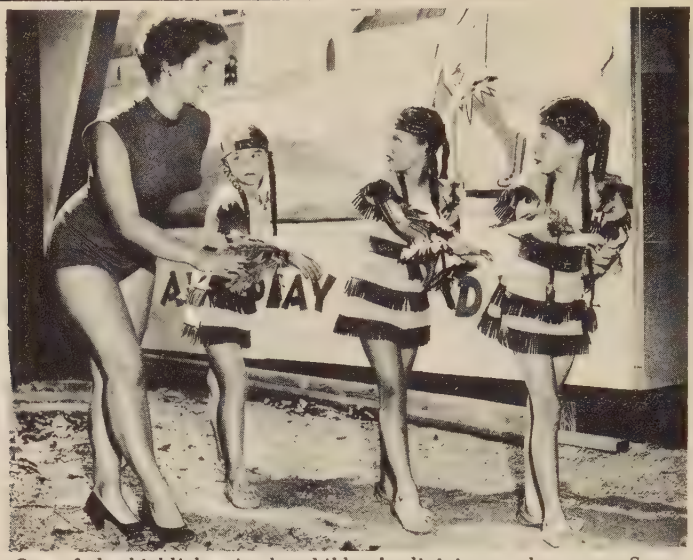


One of the highlights in the children's division at the recent Santa Clara County California Fair, was the authentic Mi-Wuk Indian Tribal dance. Chief Fuller, head of the Mi-Wuk tribe which has its home near Sonora, California, aided in the research for authentic Mi-Wuk costumes which were designed by the Keyston Mfg. Co.

The students who participated in the dance are from Madelyn's Studio of the Dance in Campbell, California. These youngsters also appeared over KGO-TV in San Francisco where they were interviewed on the history of their unusual dance. Left to right: Maryjo Long, teacher; Lauren Brannen, Lynette Hiatt and Brenda Craot.

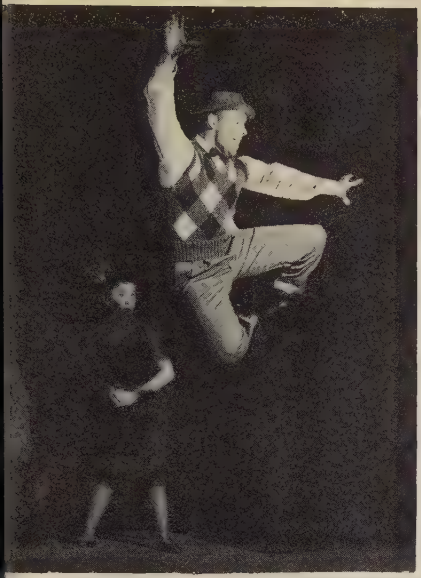
—Bernie McKernan

'The Clock Shop Fantasy' an original ballet choreographed by Emmamae Horn was presented Nov. 15th at the Concert of the Houston Youth Symphony in the Music Hall in Houston, Texas.

Principal dancers included Jeannine Durham Mrs. Horn's 1954 scholarship winner who studied ballet in the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo School last summer, and Ronald Murray, who also holds a scholarship with Mrs. Horn.

Others in the cast were: Barbara Blum, Carol Ann Logan, Tommy Tune, Bonnie Spiller, Sue Harlow , Dolores Theofilu, Mary Sue Guntz, Kay Ketelsen, Cleo Britain, Mary Ann Chambers, Clark Musgrove, Chesley Ann Santoro, Gwen Cummings, John Lee Hill, Nancy Rogers, Sheryl Schoenfield and Emory Thompson.

Howard F. Webb, recently featured in 'Life' is organizer and director of the Houston Youth Symphony.



y Kent, veteran dancer in spite of his 25 ars, has appeared in more than 30 stage oductions including, Hit The Deck, Show at, No No Nanette and Miss Liberty. Guy s a style of dancing that is somewhat of cross between Kelly and Bolger. He is on to appear in a Universal picture which still untitled.

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'Spell of the Islands'. From a recent Frances Hatch Park revue held in Oakland, Calif. Left to right: Kay Heine, Paula Heine and Julie Halsey. —Romaine

At the registration desk of the West Virginia Association of Teachers of the Dance Arts during their August convention which was held at Schrader Studios in Charleston, West Virginia. Left to right: Helen Cox Schrader, 1st Vice President; Mrs. Paul Morris, President; Florence Black Hoffman, 2nd Vice President; Bess Diets, Jean Osborne, Louise Walraven, Dusty Trabbart, Sue Griffith and Lou Flippin. Seated at desk: M.L. Wolfe, Sec-Trea.

—Charleston Daily Mail

Annette Lancaster and Mary Elizabeth Gardner, student teachers of the Margaret Rose Dance School in New Bern, N.C., performed in their school's recent 'Dance For Fun' Revue.

—Vanderbilt

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NOTE: As curtain rises, children are lined up on stage, holding little baton in right hand. Twirling of baton is nothing more than holding baton tightly in fist and twisting the wrist.

COUNT	TERM

STEP ONE

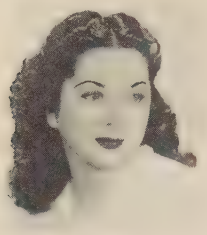
1,2	Tap R fwd (twist baton to R)
3,4	Tap R fwd (" " " L)
5,6	Tap R fwd (" " " R)
7,8	Step R together (and transfer baton to L hand)
1-8	Reverse Meas. 1,2 (and transfer baton to both hands, holding it at the center)
1,2	Tap R fwd (twirling baton with both hands) (twist baton to R)
3,4	Step R together (twist baton to L)
5-8	Reverse Meas. 5 (twist baton R then L)
1,2	Drop R heel (still twirling baton with both hands) (twist to R)
3,4	Drop L heel (" " L)
5,6	Drop R heel (" " R)
7,8	Drop L heel (" " L)

(Meas. 7,8, done in boogie fashion)

STEP TWO

Repeat Meas. 1-8

(To be concluded next month)



Diary of a Career-Girl

This is the 28th *installment of an actual day - by - day diary written by dancer,* Peachie Kane, *who is at present furthering her theatrical career by studying at the Pasadena Playhouse.*

(Copyright 1954 by DANSTAR PRESS)

Tuesday, May 13th

Rehearsed again this A.M. and I'm worried about one dance sequence in particular. It's a very important scene and should be the most outstanding number in the show, but the ones in it are not dancers. I'm having trouble getting them to put some style into it.

Wednesday, May 14th

The chorus girls rehearsed tonight. They'er improving all the time.

Thursday, May 15th

We were lucky this morning. Kip didn't have any rehearsal so he came over and played for us. The music sort of inspired the girls I guess, anyway they were better today.

This afternoon I went for my speech recording. We recorded our voices at the beginning of the year, but were not permitted to hear them. Well, today we recorded the same speech on the other side of the record. Then Miss Challgren played them back, first one side then the other.

When I heard the old one I was really horrified! It sounded like a 13-year-old. And then I heard the other side and I sounded as though I had aged 10 years. My voice is much lower now and sounds much better. I still have to get a more flexible voice.....

Friday, May 16th

Rehearsed scenes One and Two with Sheila,to work on dances for Youth, Beauty, Modesty and Everywoman.

The writing committee has decided to rewrite the entire script.

Saturday, May 17th

Rehearsed all day today on the musical numbers. We're getting more and more ideas. Sheila and Jack (Supervising Director) really like the chorus girls and there's been talk of giving them another number. I hope they do.

Wednesday, May 28th

There is a big dance number at the beginning of the Casino scene before the curtain which is done by all the Casino patrons—and after they leave the stage, Vice does a dance with two men.

This is where I'm having the most trouble. It's kind of hard getting about 14 kids on such a little stage.

Thursday, May 29th

It's been decided to rename the show 'Why Look For Love?'. That means the title song is the one I'm singing. I'm scared.

We learned there are to be no classes after tomorrow. We open Wed. and we'll be able to rehearse all day Monday and Tuesday.

Friday, May 30th

I got my costume today. It's all black lace. For my dance it's caught up on either side. I'm going to wear black net stockings and rhinestone garters. Also there's a red velvet sash—large rhinestone drop earrings plus lots of rhinestone jewlery. For the scene itself the skirt is long and I wear a black feather boa.

Saturday, May 31st.

Rehearsed all day today. The sets

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almost finished. Everyone is ching in and helping. Randy and crew are really getting things e. The sets are beautiful—sort abstract.

ent with Bill Linton for coffee r rehearsal tonight. He's a wonful performer—we're all expect- big things from him some day.

day, June 1st

ll day rehearsal today. The show eally shaping up. Mary Reynolds nce teacher) has attended all rersals in the last two days, helpus polish the numbers, etc.

Monday, June 2nd

Two more days! Everyone is so excited. The tickets are going fast. They're all interested in seeing just what the first year students are doing, and have been doing.

Tuesday, June 3rd

Tomorrow is the day! The one thing that worries me the most is my singing. Our first dress rehearsal was bad. Everyone was so tired they just couldn't seem to put much into it.

(To be continued)

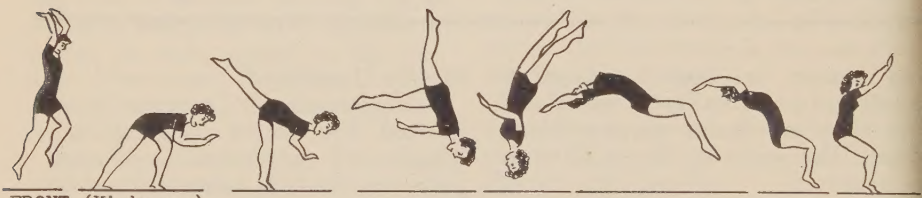
ACROBATICS & TUMBLING

BY JAMES A. ROZANAS

This is the 19th in a series of illustrated ACROBATIC and TUMBLING tricks by one of America's foremost authorities on the subject. Why not start a scrapbook of these excellent illustrations — or better, yet, file them in a permanent **DANCING STAR BINDER** each month.

FRONT (Two Foot)

From a running start, (1) hop forward and upward from one leg, landing on the floor on the balls of both feet, knees slightly bent. (2) Spring straight upward, swinging both arms upward, elbows bent, and lifting with the shoulders. (3) At the highest point of the jump, double the legs up to the chest, bringing the hands down and grasping the legs below the knees, at the same time bring the head down forward to the chest so that the body is in a tight tuck position. (4) Continue turning over forward and when the body has completed the somersault, let go of the legs and straighten the body, landing in a standing position on the balls of the feet, on the floor.



FRONT (Kickover)

From a running start, (1) hop forward and upward from the right leg, at the same time raising the left knee upward and arms overhead. (2) Place left foot on the floor, bend body forward, swinging arms downward to the body, elbows bent, at the same time kicking the right leg backward and upward. (3) Spring from the left leg, lifting with the shoulders and continue whipping the right leg over the head. (The body is now completely in the air, head down, legs apart and back arched.) (4) Continue on over, pulling legs together, bending at the waist, landing on the balls of the feet in a squat position on the floor, arms either forward or upward. Can also be done to the opposite side.

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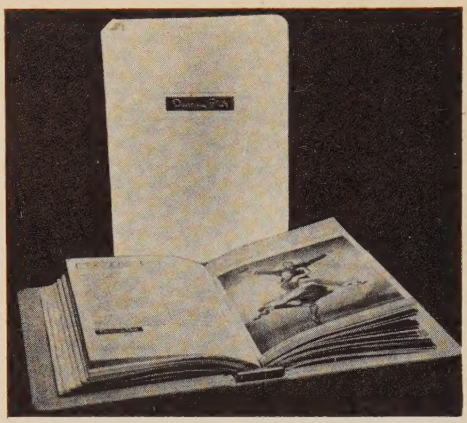

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